



Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

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ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST

PART I. Purpose of and Need for Action

1. Project Title: Medicine Lake Trap Club
Box 290
Medicine Lake, MT 59247

2. Type of Proposed Action: This proposal is divided into three parts:

1. New electrical system with heaters.
2. Replacement concrete trap house.
3. New concrete pad and sidewalks.

3. Location Affected by Proposed Action: The range has been leased from Wayne and Kathy Stringer since 1987 on 5 acres, north of the town of Medicine Lake, MT. These five acres are located in the SE ¼ SE ¼ of Section 24, Township 32 north, Range 55 east MPM, in Sheridan County, Montana.

4. Agency Authority for the Proposed Action: MCA87-1-276 through 87-1-279 (Legislative established policies and procedures for the establishment and improvement of shooting ranges) MCA87-2-105 (Departmental authority to expend funds to provide training in the safe handling and use of firearms and safe hunting practices).

5. Need for the Action(s): Part 1 New Electric System & Heaters: Installation of a new electric system plus heaters in the club house will allow increased range and club house usage in inclement weather. Winter shooting leagues and classroom education will now be possible or greatly enhanced during the winter months. Part 2 New Trap House: Current trap house is made of wood that makes equipment or personnel inside vulnerable to possible pellet penetration of the wood. Additionally the wood is starting to deteriorate increasing the hazard. The new trap house will be constructed from poured concrete, eliminating these potential safety risks. Part 3 Concrete Pad & Sidewalks: Currently there are neither concrete pads nor sidewalks around clubhouse and to the ranges.

Concrete pad and sidewalks around the clubhouse will improve the shooter staging and spectator areas, plus make the facility and ranges more handicapped accessible.

6. Objectives for the Action(s): The objective is to provide a safer and more efficient operation of the ranges. Concrete pads and sidewalks will improve handicap access around the clubhouse and to the ranges. Replacement of an older wood trap house with a concrete trap house will greatly enhance the safety and security of both the equipment and anyone in the new trap house. These projects will all ultimately result in more efficient operations and improved training or educational environment for the clubhouse, especially winter activities in the clubhouse with the new electric and heat systems. New electric and added heating systems will allow for winter shooting and training. All of these improvements will benefit the club, law enforcement, hunter education, and other user organizations.

7. Maps:



Figure 1 – Two Medicine Lake Area Map with Trap Range

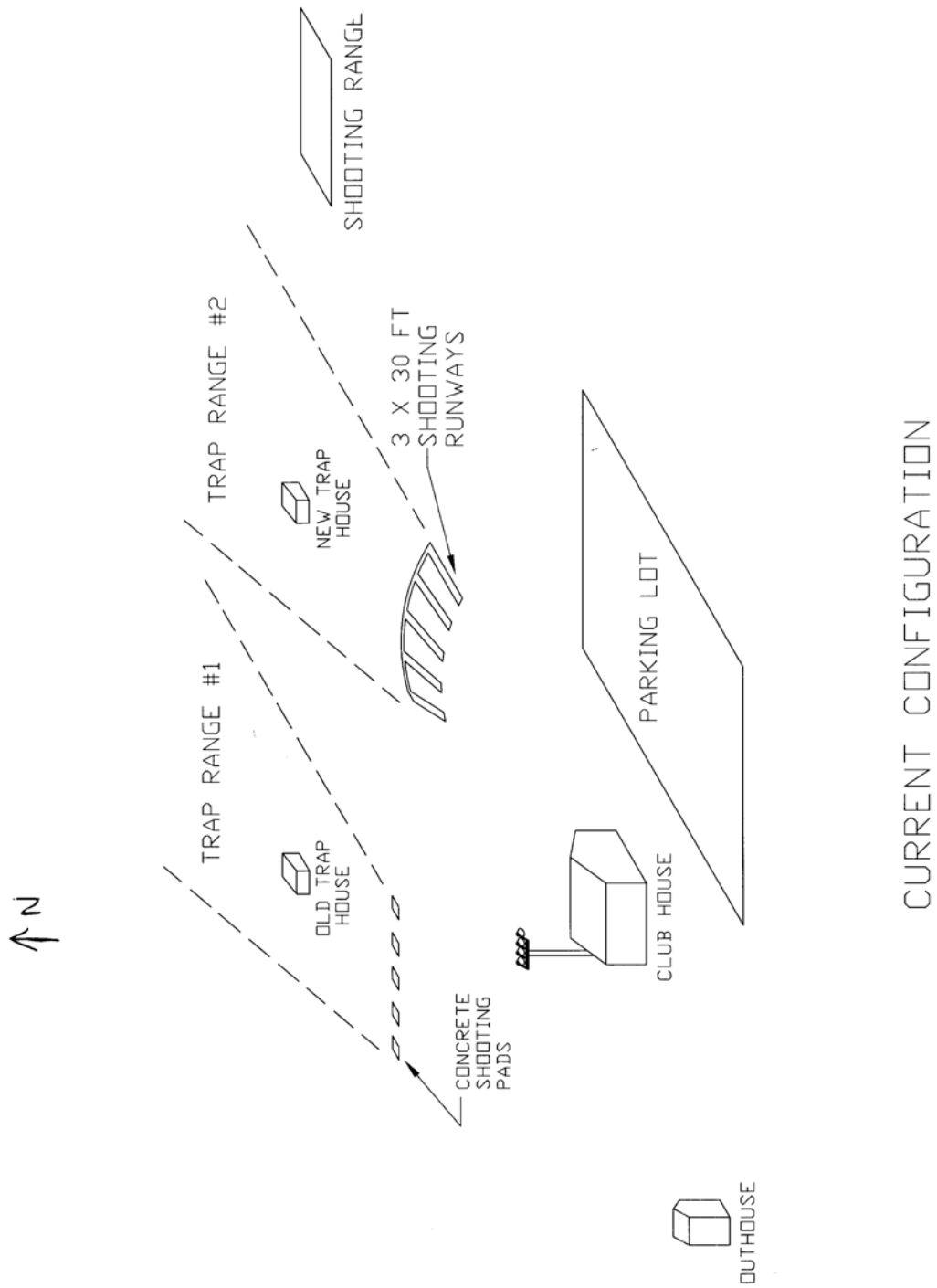


Figure 2 – Two Medicine Lake Trap Range Configuration

8. Project Size: Estimate the number of acres that would be directly affected:

Range is 5 acres, but improvements are limited to a much smaller area with proposed range enhancements (See para. 2).

9. Affected Environment (A brief description of the affected area of the proposed project):

The area affected is the existing 20-year-old Two Medicine Lake Trap Club on 5 acres approximately directly north of Two Medicine Lake, MT. Range is built upon former agricultural land and is surrounded by agricultural parcels on the west, north and east, with the town of Two Medicine Lake on the south.

10. Description of Project: In Accordance With (IAW) contracts agreements with Fish, Wildlife & Parks, and all projects are to be completed by June 30, 2009.

Part 1 Install new electrical system and heaters in the clubhouse.

Part 2 Replace the older wood trap house with a safer more secure concrete trap house.

Part 3 Install approximately 10 yards of new concrete for a pad in front of the old clubhouse and concrete sidewalks around new clubhouse, to the old clubhouse and to the ranges.

Also see paragraphs 2 & 5.

11. List any Other Local, State, or Federal Agency that has Overlapping or Additional Jurisdiction:

(a) Permits, Licenses and/or Authorizations:

<u>Agency Name</u>	<u>Permit</u>
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N/A

Funding:

<u>Agency Name</u>	<u>Funding Amount</u>
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks	\$4317.00

12. Affiliations, Cooperating Agencies, User Groups and/or Supporting Groups:

In the past Two Medicine Lake Trap Club has traditionally hosted two ATA registered shoots per year, plus a “Tough-Man” shoot in February and the “Hi-Line” shoot for teams across the Hi-Line of Montana. Additionally the club hosts shoots for Ducks Unlimited and the local youth scholastic shooting sports. The range is also utilized for shooting education events for 4-H and hunter education programs. The club sponsors both league and public shooting with the pheasant “warm-up” shoot becoming very popular. The range has also been made available for law enforcement usage. In the past the trap club hosted between 225 and 275 shooters a year. With proposed facility improvements that participation will be increasing.

13. History of the Planning and Scoping Process, and Any Public Involvement:

Proposed range improvements and safety enhancements had been discussed within the membership of the club and with the associated project vendors and contractors. No other public involvement was deemed necessary.

14. List of Agencies Consulted/Contacted During Preparation of the EA:

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

15. Name, Address and Phone Number of Project Sponsor:

Dale Nelson
Box 330
Froid, MT 59226
(406) 766-2222
2biglake@nemontel.net

16. Other Pertinent Information:

Shooting range applications require the participant's governing body to approve by resolution its submission of applications for shooting range funding assistance. Resolution Date: March 26, 2007

PART II. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

Abbreviated Checklist – The degree and intensity determines extent of Environmental Review. An abbreviated checklist may be used for those projects that are not complex, controversial, or are not in environmental sensitive areas)

Table 1. Potential impact on physical environment.

Will the proposed action result in potential impacts to:	Unknown	Potentially Significant	Minor	None	Can Be Mitigated	Comments Below
1. Unique, endangered, fragile, or limited environmental resources				X		
2. Terrestrial or aquatic life and/or habitats				X		#2
3. Introduction of new species into an area				X		
4. Vegetation cover, quantity & quality				X		
5. Water quality, quantity & distribution (surface or groundwater)				X		#5
6. Existing water right or reservation				X		
7. Geology & soil quality, stability & moisture				X		
8. Air quality or objectionable odors				X		
9. Historical & archaeological sites				X		
10. Demands on environmental resources of land, water, air & energy				X		
11. Aesthetics				X		

Comments (A description of potentially significant, or unknown, impacts and potential alternatives for mitigation must be provided.)

2. & 5. There are no live streams or ponds on the site and no delineated wetlands.

Table 2. Potential impacts on human environment.

Will the proposed action result in potential impacts to:	Unknown	Potentially Significant	Minor	None	Can Be Mitigated	Comments Below
1. Social structures and cultural diversity				X		
2. Changes in existing public benefits provided by wildlife populations and/or habitat				X		
3. Local and state tax base and tax revenue				X		
4. Agricultural production				X		#4
5. Human health				X		#5
6. Quantity & distribution of community & personal income				X		
7. Access to & quality of recreational activities				X		#7
8. Locally adopted environmental plans & goals (ordinances)				X		
9. Distribution & density of population and housing				X		
10. Demands for government services				X		
11. Industrial and/or commercial activity				X		

Comments (A description of potentially significant, or unknown, impacts and potential alternatives for mitigation must be provided.)

4. The site is adjacent to surrounding agricultural land on three sides, and the highway and town of Two Medicine Lake to the south.

5. Range site plans, construction and the ongoing operational and maintenance plans meet the standards of safety for the range participants and the public at large.

7. Range will provide year round controlled access and fulfils a need for a range to accommodate law enforcement training, hunter education, and public shooting.

Part III. Environmental Consequences

Does the proposed action involve potential risks or adverse effects which are uncertain but extremely harmful if they were to occur? No

Does the proposed action have impacts that are individually minor, but cumulatively significant or potentially significant? This proposed action has no impacts that are individually minor, but cumulatively significant or potentially significant. Cumulative impacts have been assessed considering any incremental impact of the proposed action when they are combined with other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions, and no significant impacts or substantially controversial issues were found. There are no extreme hazards created with this project and there are no conflicts with the substantive requirements of any local, state, or federal law, regulation, standard or formal plan.

Identification of the Preferred Alternatives:

The proposed alternative A, alternative B and the no action alternative were considered.

- **Alternative A** is as described in paragraph 10 (Description of Project) Installation of new electrical system and heaters in the clubhouse, and new concrete replacement trap house, concrete pad and sidewalks.
- **Alternative B (No Action Alternative)** the area will remain as an active trap range without proposed facility improvements.

Description and analysis of reasonable alternatives (including the no action alternative) to the proposed action whenever alternatives are reasonably available and prudent to consider and a discussion of how the alternatives would be implemented: Two alternatives have been considered, **A** (Proposed Alternative) and **B** (No Action Alternative). There were no other alternatives that were deemed reasonably available, nor prudent.

Neither the proposed alternative (A) nor the no action alternative (B) would have any significant negative environmental or potentially negative consequences.

- There are beneficial consequences to Acceptance of alternatives **A** to install an electric system and heaters for expanded facility utility during winter and inclement weather operations, to provide an improved safety environment with a concrete trap house and improve club house and range access with concrete pad and sidewalks. All of these enhancements will improve both the daily operations and registered shoots in addition to expanding the range is availability and capability for the club, the general public, community organizations, law enforcement, shotgun training, and hunter education.
- The No Action Alternative would be not to install an electric system and heaters in the clubhouse, replace the wooden trap house with a concrete house and add concrete pad and sidewalks to the range. The trap range would continue on with present shooting

activities. Land use would remain the same. Present activities include trap range without the proposed improvements, expanded winter capabilities, and enhanced safety. Range also includes an additional range that can accommodate rifle, shotgun, pistol, and black powder shooting. These other range activities would also continue. Therefore the proposed alternative is the prudent alternative.

Describe any Alternatives considered and eliminated from Detailed Study:

None

List and explain proposed mitigative measures (stipulations):

None

Individuals or groups contributing to, or commenting on, this EA:

Dale Nelson, Box 330, Froid, MT 59226.

PART IV NARRATIVE EVALUATION AND COMMENT

All of the pertinent or potential impacts of the project have been reviewed, discussed, and analyzed. None of the project reviewed were complex, controversial, or located in an environmentally sensitive area. The projects being proposed are on properties leased by the Medicine Lake Trap Club. The low impact activities proposed and the increased recreational opportunity indicates that this should be considered the final version of the environmental assessment. There are no significant environmental or economic impacts associated with the proposed alternative (A). The +20 year history of the Medicine Lake Trap Club providing shooting opportunities to its members and the public, indicates support for the proposed alternative. Therefore, Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks should approve the proposed alternative (A) for new electric system & heaters, concrete trap house, concrete pad and concrete sidewalks.

EA prepared by: GENE R. HICKMAN
Ecological Assessments
Helena, MT 59602

Date Completed: June 16, 2008

PART IV. EA CONCLUSION SECTION

Recommendation and justification concerning preparation of EIS:

None required.

Describe public involvement, if any:

Announcement for EA comment will be published in the Sheridan County News and on the Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks website to allow an opportunity for public review.

The EA will be published on the FWP web site beginning on July 9 and comments will be taken until 5:00 PM on August 11, 2008.